

HEAC - June 21, 2023

Meeting Date: 21-Jun-23 09:30

Location: Microsoft Teams Meeting

Participants

Davis, Xusana

Chesbrough, Sara (she/her)

Crawford, Joanne

Ganguly, Kheya (She/Her)

Hughes, Mark

Kell Arbor

Launderville, Sarah

Murphy, Kirsten

Scheld, Patrick

Yandow, Sandi

Stetler, Katie (she/her)

Guests/Members of the public: Rajnii Eddins, Kathie Voight Walsh, Christine Hughes, Isaac Owusu

Notes taken by Xusana Davis.

Acronyms That May Be Used Below

- AHS - VT Agency of Human Services
- BGS - VT Department of Buildings & General Services
- HEAC - Health Equity Advisory Commission
- HRC - Human Rights Commission
- HSB - Human Services Board
- OHE - Office of Health Equity
- RFP - Request for Proposals
- VDH - VT Department of Health

Agenda

1. Introductions
2. RFP Update
3. Legislative Update
4. OHE Update
5. Planning for next report
6. Youth Prevention and Support Systems

General Discussion

- Kell Arbor:
 - Shared updates about current events involving anti-trans people and incidents:
 - Vergennes High School hosted a speaker widely considered to be anti-trans and LGBTQIA+ supporters and allies gathered there
 - A local Black and gay person in Vermont was very publicly threatened and harassed at a recent arts event. The community has mobilized to support him, but there needs to be a statewide response.
 - Randolph school case has settled.
 - A Jewish family in Cabot has been targeted with vandalism and harassment.

- Considering these cases and others across the state, a big stakeholder conversation is needed to support these small towns in VT experiencing these waves of harm.
- Kheya is revitalizing the Child and Family Trauma workgroup in the Agency of Human Services and asks if someone from the community would be willing to sit on the steering committee and help advocate for some possible statewide response activities.
- Sandi: Look to the "public use" policies for more insight into what is allowable and what is not.
 - Kell: These policies have been changed in the past

Public Comment

- Kathie Voight Walsh: Where can members of the public find links to meeting minutes and recordings?
 - Answer: All HEAC meeting agendas and minutes are stored on the [HEAC website](#). Recordings are shared on request.
- Christine Hughes: Is the Human Rights Commission on this Commission?
 - Answer: No. The legislature did not include the HRC among the 29 members when setting up this Commission.
 - Christine: I often see references to the "Human Services Board" but there is no information about who the members are or what the Board does. Where can one find that information?
 - Answer: The Board is [described on the state's Human Services website](#) and its membership is [listed online](#) as well.

Request for Proposals

- Xusana Davis: Updates the group on the status of the RFP. The RFP is currently being routed for signatures and will eventually be posted/managed by BGS.

Legislative Update

- Kirsten Murphy: The budget veto was overridden yesterday by the legislature. There was no obvious change to the HEAC's appropriation, but Kirsten will confirm with her colleague.

OHE Options and Update

- Sara Chesbrough: A list of options on the table include the Governor's office, the Health Department, the Agency of Human Services, the Agency of Administration, the Office of Racial Equity, or as an independent instrumentality of state government (similar to the Housing and Conservation Board).
 - The subgroup that compiled and discussed these options agrees there needs to be commitment from leadership across government in order for an OHE to be successful.
 - There appeared to be substantial support for the option of having the OHE be an independent entity because it would be more able/likely to have independent opinions.
- Xusana: Concerned about the trend of creating lots of independent entities in government that overlap on the same topics but are siloed in their work. This creates questions of jurisdiction, resources, and sustainability. Some work--like equity work--needs to be independent to protect it against the risk of it being taken over by bad actors or people who are hostile to the work, but is creating a new independent entity the correct solution?

- Response: We should focus our attention on this proposed OHE and how it should be set up, not focus on contextualizing it within the broader landscape of how/where/how many other offices are set up around state government.

Upcoming Report

- Deferring this to the next meeting due to time constraints

Youth Prevention & Support Systems

- Deferring this to the next meeting due to time constraints

Action Items

- XD: Continue advancing the RFP sign-off process
- All: If interested in joining the Social Determinants subgroup, contact Sara C.

Items Shared

- [HEAC Meeting Agendas and Minutes](#)
- [Human Services Board](#) and [membership](#)
- [Report: Broken Systems, Broken Promises](#)

Next Meeting

- July 11, 2023 @ 12:30-2:00 p.m. Details on the HEAC website.
- Agenda: Upcoming report, Youth Prevention and Support Systems, Homelessness support